[www.mckenziegrouppractice.co.uk](http://www.mckenziegrouppractice.co.uk) [www.wynyardandhartfields.co.uk](http://www.wynyardandhartfields.co.uk)

# **The Future of Hartfields Medical Centre**

In 2021 McKenzie Group submitted a draft proposal to commissioners to close Hartfields Medical Centre, located in the Hartfields Retirement Village because:

* they had limited accommodation available,
* they were struggling to maintain consistency of care across their multiple sites,
* changes to working practices during COVID had changed the way patients accessed services, and
* they felt the closure would enhance both clinical quality and practice resilience.

Following analysis and review of the feedback from two phases of patient and stakeholder engagement (report available [here](https://www.mckenziegrouppractice.co.uk/news.aspx) on the McKenzie group website) McKenzie Group understood how important the Hartfields site was to their patients, and the potential impact that a full closure would have. They worked with their Patient Participation Group [PPG] and a small number of representatives from the Hartfields Retirement Village, to co-design a model for delivering services from Hartfields on a part-time basis.

The co-designed model to deliver services from Hartfields 3 days a week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, submitted to the ICB in August 2023 was not supported because the application had not clearly articulated any positive or adverse impact for all patients and protected characteristic groups and groups who face health inequalities. The ICB did, however recognise:

* + the extensive and robust engagement activity that had been undertaken and the number of engagement activities and approaches undertaken, and
  + that McKenzie Group had moved from their original position of full closure to one of reduced hours, following analysis and evaluation of the two phases of patient and stakeholder engagement, and in recognition of how important the Hartfield's site is to their patients, and the potential impact that full closure would have had, and commended the involvement of:- Healthwatch Hartlepool, and McKenzie Group's PPG members and the residents of Hartfields Retirement Village who were willing to co-design a part-time model, despite their reservations in terms of accessing services.

In addition, and recognising the issues raised by McKenzie Group in their original draft proposal, the ICB agreed to enable an 18-month part-time pilot to be undertaken during which compelling evidence of the actual impact on patients and the practice would be gathered, utilising a set of agreed baseline measures, which would take account of any seasonal effect on activity and support a robust commissioning decision for Hartfields going forward.

Following careful consideration McKenzie Group made the decision to withdraw their application for a part-time branch surgery and will continue to provide services five days a week from Hartfields Medical Centre.

Dr Timlin from McKenzie Group said: "I would like to thank everyone that took the time to take part in the engagement activity and tell us their views about how they use Hartfields and other services within the McKenzie Group. We have listened to those views, as well as feedback from our local stakeholders in Hartlepool and have made the decision to continue to provide services from Hartfields.

"Hartfields will therefore continue to be open 5 days a week and it's very much business as usual for our patients accessing the surgery."